

Jan 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR: DDS Operations Staff, [REDACTED] A

Dick; your suspense system very efficiently reminds me repeatedly that we have not issued a current correspondence handbook. I recommend that we cancel plans to produce a correspondence handbook and that the item be removed from your tickler system for the following reasons:

- A. The clerical training faculty is the only source of demand for a correspondence handbook in the Agency. Anything taught in the clerical training classes is subject to modification by the practices and procedures of the individual components to which the students are assigned. The Correspondence Handbook published by the General Services Administration should serve adequately to meet the clerical training requirements.
- B. There is no such thing as standard correspondence policy and procedure in the Agency and this is the primary reason that we have been unable to coordinate a proposal even at the informal level during the past several years. The advantages of standard correspondence practice are not so impressive that they are readily salable to managers at any level of the Organization. This militates against the adoption of the recommendation that a handbook be prepared for use at levels of the Agency subordinate to the deputy directors. Coordination of standard-

ized practice at these levels is no less a problem than it is at the upper echelons.


C. The resources of the Records Administration Branch are already stretched too thin in supporting activities of the Records Management Board in addition to their normal duties. We have no one available who can be given the task of preparing a correspondence handbook even if it were a necessary and desirable thing to do.

In my discussion of the Records Program with [REDACTED] 1A

25X1A [REDACTED] and members of the DDS Staff a couple of weeks ago I offered the suggestion that we cease to concern ourselves with correspondence management in the conventional sense and that we begin to concern ourselves with correspondence systems. We should be less concerned with width of margins, standard indentations, proper spacing and alignment of date lines and signature lines and so on, and more concerned with the system of correspondence which creates paper in multiple copies, assigns a log number to it at each element of the organization it passes through on route to its destination, in such a way that we can identify at the time of creation the copy which ultimately will be stored at the Records Center, in some manner by which it can be identifiable and retrievable by any element of the organization which has a requirement for access to it. I believe this is a valid recommendation. The problem is we don't have any resources to devote to this approach either. I am convinced, however, that resources can be much more productively applied to a systems approach than to a minutely detailed procedural

MEMORANDUM

[REDACTED] A
Chief, Support Services Staff



I would like to see this item killed altogether,
but if not that, let's at least put it off until the study group
that's about to be created has had a chance to look at the
Records Program and made its recommendations.